

CAREER FOCUS

Can you explain what the MGIB “kicker” is?

BY MASTER SGT. DAVID HALVORSON
TEAM KIRTLAND career assistance advisor

Well, here we are, it’s a new year, we have a pay raise and you don’t know what you’re going to do with all that extra money in your paycheck each month.

I know it’s not a likely scenario for most of us, but *now* is a good time to look at putting some of your money to work for your future—perhaps through the MGIB Kicker! Interested? Read on...

Fact: Personnel entering active duty after June 30, 1985 were and are eligible to enroll in the Montgomery GI Bill program.

Fact: For those who *did* enroll, our military pay was reduced by \$100 a month for 12 months for a total benefit of \$35,460 (\$985 x 36 months). That’s a pretty good deal, but did you know that you can in-

crease your total benefits by over \$5,000?

Fact: A program that deserves a closer look is the Montgomery GI Bill Buy-up or ‘kicker,’ which allows those already enrolled in Montgomery GI Bill (under Category I) to contribute up to \$600 more (increments of \$20, up to \$600) for a total contribution of \$1,800.

What does this extra \$600 get you? The ‘kicker’ can net you up to \$150 extra a month above the standard Montgomery GI Bill pay rate—that’s an increase in benefits of \$5,400 over 36 months!

If this sounds like a good deal to you, you’re not alone. Hundreds of Airmen have already taken advantage of this program, so why not put some of those extra dollars to work for you?

For more information on Montgomery GI Bill benefits and how to participate in the Kicker (Buy-up) program, logon to the GI Bill Web site at



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www.gibill.va.gov or visit the Kirtland AFB Education Center.

Want to make an appointment to see your Career Assistance Advisor? Call or e-mail me at 846-6636 or david.halvorson@kirtland.af.mil.

Base operations patch collector retires

BY JENNIFER E. WEST
Nucleus staff writer

When Ray Rivera retired from the military in 1980 he returned to Kirtland AFB as a federal civilian and “adopted” a patch collection at Base Operations.

The collection has about 1,500 patches representing the Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines and NASA. Some of the patches, Mr. Rivera said, date back to the 40s and 50s, as well as the 60s and 70s when the collection’s growth slowed.

Mr. Rivera doesn’t know who started the collection but he rescued it when his building was to be razed and operations moved to the current facility. And, he said, others in his office have vowed to carry on the care of the collection that contains many shuttle mission patches, as well as other early ones like the Mercury missions.

He retired from civil service Jan. 2.

“We got to know just about all the astronauts...some as personal friends,” Mr. Rivera said, adding that



Ray Rivera with some of the more than 1,500 patches in the Base Operations collection. Mr. Rivera retired from civil service, Jan. 2.

Kirtland AFB was a “good gas stop for those guys.”

Hundreds of people see the patch collection, and in the past have contributed patches from their uniforms. But fewer people are relinquishing patches, probably, he said, because patches now must be bought by the servicemember.



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Nucleus is on the Web at www.kirtland.af.mil

E-mail articles only to 377ABW.NUCLEUS@kirtland.af.mil

Editorial: 846-4235.

Submission deadline
9 a.m. the Friday before publication. Deadlines change for holidays.

Advertising deadlines
Classified: Tuesday, noon, 892-9400 or observerclass@attglobal.net

Display: Friday, 5 p.m., 892-9400 or observerads@attglobal.net

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FORUM

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Emission testing revisited

We received many follow-on inquiries to our Oct. 31 *Nucleus* Forum "Which county do you live in?" Although the information in that article remains accurate, we appreciate this opportunity to clarify the State of New Mexico's (and therefore Motor Vehicle Division's) and Pass and Registration's requirements pertaining to emission testing, since they are different.

The MVD office policies are mandated by the State of New Mexico's guidelines. To register your vehicle in this state, the MVD requires an emission test from Bernalillo County residents only. Residents of other counties do not require an emission test to register their vehicles with the state.

However, Pass and Registration must follow federal law (Federal Clean Air Act); which requires an emissions test for all vehicles registered on the installation.

It states that when registering a vehicle on a federal installation the individual is required to show proof of an emission test "for all vehicles owned, leased or operated by civilian and military personnel on Federal Installations as well as agency-owned or operated vehicles, except tactical military vehicles. This requirement shall not apply to visiting agency, employee, or military vehicles as long as such visits do not exceed 60 calendar days a year."

Neither the MVD nor Pass and Registration accept out-of-state emission tests. However, if you have had an emissions test performed elsewhere (within the last 90 days), you may take your certificate to Vehicle Pollution Management Program (VPMP) Headquarters, 1500 Broadway Northeast, and apply for a free re-test. An emission testing station is near their office.

Keep in mind that when registering a vehicle at any MVD, you are only registering to meet state requirements, and not registering for access to a federal installation. That is accomplished at Pass and Registration.

If you have further questions on requirements for registering your vehicle with the state of New Mexico or obtaining a base decal, please call MVD (846-8390) or Pass and Registration (846-6429).

What's up with Otero trail decision?

As a concerned citizen and user of Otero trails, can you give me an update on whether or not Kirtland AFB will fence in the military withdrawal area?

We have finished reviewing the 1,100 public comments received on our draft Perimeter Fence Environmental Assessment and during our public meeting. We are now in the process of looking at a number of alternatives that have come to light as a result of the



COL. HENRY L. ANDREWS, JR.
377th Air Base Wing commander

public's concern and our own analysis. We continue to gather information on this very complex requirement.

No decision has been made on fencing that might impact the Otero trail system. That said, our concerns remain: security for the base, protecting the public from hazards and recognizing the access the public has enjoyed in this area for many years.

We'll keep you posted on our progress.

Vehical registration made more convenient

Why can't vehicle stickers be issued at the gate rather than Pass and Registration?

It's extremely inconvenient to make it to Pass and Registration during working hours. If the gate issued the stickers, I could come to the base on weekends. I live 65 miles round trip from the base.

Based on your input, those interested in doing so can visit the Gibson Gate, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., to register a vehicle. All we need to see are a valid driver's license, proof of insurance, vehicle registration and the mandatory exhaust inspection certificate, as well as an identification credential that is recognized for entry to Kirtland AFB.

In addition, we will open the Pass and Registration Section in the Consolidated Support Building, 846-6429, on: Jan. 10, Feb. 7, March 6, April 3, May 1, June 5, Aug. 28 and Sept. 11, from 8-10 a.m.

This is to help those who find it difficult to get away from work or for those who only use the base on weekends.

Social Security number

I worked for the Air Force for 22 years and I had never noticed my Social Security Account Number was on my identification card. A computer person told me that having your Social Security number on your identification card was dangerous because of identity theft.

The Social Security number on my identification card is dangerous, can you do something about it?

In 1967, DOD stopped using serial numbers and began using the Social Security Account Number as the sole personal identifier within financial and personnel data systems.

Mandatory disclosure of the Social Security Account number in order to receive certain benefits was made a matter of law for military entitlements; most recently it was added as a condition by DOD in receiving health care under any uniformed services program.

In addition, in accordance with 36-3026(I) dated Dec. 20, 2002, Congress has authorized DOD to require mandatory disclosure of Social Security numbers.

DOD determined that it was safer to show the account number on the identification card and ensure that members requesting access to these services were, indeed, who they claimed to be.

While there are risks to having this information on the card, the benefit of ensuring only authorized individuals receive access to government facilities and services outweigh those risks. It is critical that identification card holders safeguard their cards at all times to keep unauthorized individuals from getting access to this information.

Evaporative cooler working poorly

I have noticed several neighbors receiving letters to clean up their yards. I agree that there are some who do need that. However, I feel that to become motivated to do so, life in your home must be comfortable the entire spring and summer. I, as well as many others in Pershing, call continuously because our swamp coolers work poorly.

Every time, it boils down to: "they are crummy and they all work poorly." Because of this, I invested in two air conditioning units to keep my family cool. I have spent hundreds of dollars to make my yard and home beautiful. It is not fair that I must spend my own money to provide a more "decent" appearing home, when housing cannot provide me comfort in that home.

Since there is basically no "self-help" store it is virtually impossible to make the homes nice from the exterior.

Is there something that can be done to fix our coolers and is there a plan to open a self-help store?

Thanks for calling. Kirtland Family Housing values residents' feedback and uses it to improve service on all levels.

The evaporative cooling unit in your home, and others in Pershing Park, is a MasterCool, the next generation in evaporative cooling and they are no more than six years old. Because of the new technology and longer life associated with the unit, they are ideally suited for low humidity climates like that found in Albuquerque.

There are times when the humidity rises that the unit may not perform at its best capability. Remember, you must leave windows open slightly for the air from the cooler to circulate.

A review of the work history regarding your unit showed that it is well within the norm. In the winter season, it is virtually impossible to correctly assess the unit's performance.

Please allow Kirtland Family Housing an opportunity to re-address your unit's performance during the warm season.

A self-help facility is available 8 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Zia Park office, 7680 Ridgcrest, or call 232-2049.

Kudos to bike repairman

I took two bikes to the bicycle shop at Outdoor Recreation for a checkup and tune up and to get the tires prepared for use in New Mexico.

I had an excellent experience. I was given an estimate of the cost to get the two bikes tuned up and checked over. The bikes were repaired in a timely manner and at a little less cost than originally estimated.

My thanks to Tyrone Palmer for doing a great job with a great attitude.

Thank you for your great comments regarding our Bicycle Shop and staff members at Outdoor Recreation. Mr. Palmer and the rest of the Outdoor Recreation staff take pride in providing excellent customer service and timely, high quality work at a great value.

Positive comments like yours help the 377th Services Squadron gauge the level of performance and service we provide. Anyone needing bicycle service or repairs can call 846-1499

Forum

We want your suggestions and comments concerning Kirtland AFB.

However, may we also suggest giving base agencies or the chain of command the chance to resolve your concern before calling Forum.

If you decide the Forum is the right answer, we don't print callers' names.

Customer service

Chapel, 846-5691
CE Help Desk, 846-8222
Commissary, 846-9586
Computer help, 846-5926
Energy wasting, 846-4633
Exchange Service, 266-9887
Family Services, 846-0741
Finance, 846-8045, 846-6639
Law Enforcement, 846-7926
Legal Services, 846-4217
Medical Clinic, 846-3406
Services Squadron, 846-1828

Write: 377 ABW/CC Forum
2000 Wyoming SE
Kirtland AFB, NM 87117